

Remarks:

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1-4 remain in the application. Claims 1 and 3-4 have been amended.

Affirmation of the election of claims 1, 3, and 4 is hereby made, however, applicants reserve the right to have that claim considered should a generic claim be held patentable. At the present time, claim 1 is believed to be patentable and generic.

In item 3 on page 3 of the above-identified Office action, claims 1, 3, and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Applicants respectfully traverse.

The only important feature of the stops is that they engage a protruding edge or corner of the belt. This is believed to be clear from all of the exemplary embodiments. See, for example, Fig. 2 and stop surface 27.1; Fig. 3 and stop surface 28.1; Fig. 4 and stop surface 29.1; and Fig. 5 and stop surface 28'1. Please also refer to page 4, line 22 through page 5, line 8, where it is explained that the stops prevent lateral deviation of the belt and are assigned to protruding edges of the belt.

It is accordingly believed that the claims meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Should the Examiner find any further objectionable items, counsel would appreciate a telephone call during which the matter may be resolved.

In item 5 on page 4 of the Office action, claims 1, 3, and 4 have been rejected as being anticipated over Hoffmann et al. (6,250,224) under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

The claims have been rewritten to more clearly define the invention. Support for the most of the changes to claims 1 and 4 are inherent within the claims. Support for the added feature that the shaped surfaces of the stops are either inclined surfaces or curved surfaces can be found by referring to the specification at page 4, lines 23-25. Additional support can be found by referring to: Fig. 2 and stop surface 27.1; Fig. 3 and stop surface 28.1; Fig. 4 and stop surface 29.1; and Fig. 5 and stop surface 28''.1. Obviously, these shaped surfaces act on the protruding edges of the belt as can be seen in the figures and as specified in the cited passage on page 4.

Hoffmann et al. teach a drive gear 64 with vertical flanges acting laterally against the sides of the drive belt 60. The

flanges do not have curved or inclined shaped surfaces acting on protruding edges of the belt 60.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claims 1 or 4. Claims 1 and 4 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art and since all of the dependent claims are ultimately dependent on claim 1, they are believed to be patentable as well.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-4 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, he is respectfully requested to telephone counsel so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

Please charge any other fees which might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner and

Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : Dieter Bäcker et al.

Applic. No. : 09/780,307

Filed : February 9, 2001

Title : Belt Drive

Examiner : Kevin D. Williams

Group Art Unit : 2854

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

Claim 1 (amended). A belt drive for a machine for printing images on a flat printing material, comprising:

[having] a continuous belt for revolving during operation[, comprising]; said belt defining a longitudinal direction and a transverse direction, said belt having two protruding edges oriented in the longitudinal direction of said belt and being opposite one another in the transverse direction of said belt; and

a belt guide having stops [for] with shaped surfaces acting on said two protruding edges of [the] said belt[, said edges being oriented in a longitudinal direction of the belt and opposite one another in a transverse direction of the belt];

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said shaped surfaces being selected from a group consisting of  
inclined surfaces and curved surfaces.

Claim 3 (amended). The belt drive according to claim 1,  
[including rotationally symmetrical stop surfaces formed on  
said stops,] wherein: said shaped surfaces are rotationally  
symmetrical stop surfaces [said stop surfaces being] in  
rolling contact with said edges.

Claim 4 (amended). A machine for printing images on flat  
printing material, comprising [having] a belt drive [with]  
including:

a continuous belt for revolving during operation[,]; said belt  
defining a longitudinal direction and a transverse direction,  
said belt having two protruding edges oriented in the  
longitudinal direction of said belt and being opposite one  
another in the transverse direction of said belt; and

a belt guide having stops with shaped surfaces acting on said  
two protruding edges of said belt;

said shaped surfaces being selected from a group consisting of  
inclined surfaces and curved surfaces

[with a continuous belt revolving during operation, comprising  
a belt guide having stops for two protruding edges of the  
belt, said edges being oriented in a longitudinal direction of  
the belt and opposite to one another in a transverse direction  
of the belt].